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Employment and Income of **RURAL FAMILIES IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS**

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Employment and Income of RURAL FAMILIES IN SOUTHERN ILLINOIS

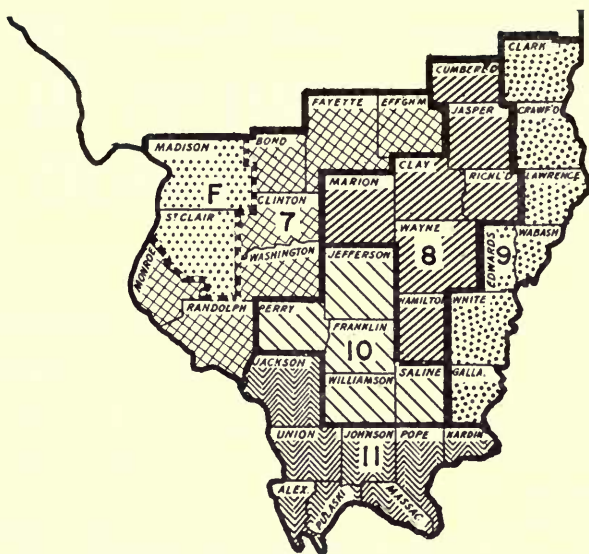
J. E. WILLS and HAROLD L. KOELLER¹

IN MANY COMMUNITIES rural families vary greatly in their dependence on farming. The extremes are obvious—commercial farm families with no income outside the farm, and families living in the country but depending entirely on nonfarm income or work. In between are families whose income is from different combinations of farm and nonfarm work or investments. In areas such as southern Illinois where one finds many of these variations, agricultural statistics, particularly those dealing with average incomes of farm groups, are often inadequate. They fail to give complete or accurate descriptions of many rural families.

Certain questions are not answered by agricultural statistics. Which families living in the country should be classified as farm families? How does including or excluding groups not completely dependent on farming influence data on average production or income per farm? What is the economic status of families depending little or not at all on farming? What characteristics and interests of particular groups of rural residents should be recognized in planning and carrying out educational programs? Obviously such questions mean more in some areas than in others, but in most areas their significance has increased as improved transportation and development of other conveniences have made rural living attractive to more families.

The two-county survey. To find answers to the above questions a survey was made in two Illinois counties, Wayne and Franklin, late in 1947. In each county the sample was drawn through a random choice of sections to give approximately 200 rural residences. About 1 out of 15 sections was selected in Franklin county and about 1 out of 25 in Wayne. Within the sample sections all residences located outside of

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Illinois was divided in the 1950 U.S. Census into 17 economic areas, metropolitan and nonmetropolitan. In southern Illinois only Area F was designated as metropolitan, and in presenting agricultural statistics, it is combined with Area 7. The two counties, Wayne and Franklin, which are in Areas 8 and 10, are in many ways representative of southern Illinois. In both counties farms are small, farm ownership is the general rule, and off-farm work is common. In having mines as a source of nonfarm income, Franklin differs from Wayne but resembles the other counties in Economic Area 10. (Fig. 1)

(Fig. 1)

town limits were surveyed. In this study, therefore, the term "rural families" is limited to open-country residents.

Area characterized by Franklin and Wayne counties. In many respects Wayne and Franklin counties are representative of the whole area of southern Illinois. Farms are smaller than in other parts of the state, farm incomes are lower, and off-farm work is an important source of farmers' incomes.¹ In the 1950 U.S. Census of Agriculture Franklin county was placed in Economic Area 10 and Wayne county in Economic Area 8 (Fig. 1). Selected Census data for all the economic areas of southern Illinois are summarized in Table 1. County data for Areas 10 and 8 are presented in Tables 2 and 3.

In four other Illinois counties rural families have general employment and income patterns much like those of Franklin county (Fig. 1 and Tables 1 and 2). In these five counties more than in any other

¹See also A. J. Cross and J. E. Wills, Organization and Operation of Farms in the Claypan Area of Southern Illinois. Ill. Agr. Exp. Sta. Bul. 579. 1954.

Table 1. — Characteristics of Farms in Economic Areas in Southern Illinois

(From 1950 U.S. Census of Agriculture)

Item	Areas F and 7	Area 8	Area 9	Area 10	Area 11	State average
Economic class						
Commercial farms, percent.....	82	70	75	48	65	82
Part-time farms, percent.....	9	14	13	21	16	8
Residential farm, percent.....	9	16	12	31	19	10
Sales and other income						
Farms reporting sales of farm products, percent.....	97	96	97	92	95	97
Sales of farm products per farm reporting sales.....	\$4,591	\$2,664	\$4,036	\$1,869	\$2,492	\$7,255
Farms with other income exceeding sales of farm products, percent.....	18	31	26	49	33	18
Off-farm work by operators						
Percent reporting.....	33	41	40	50	41	33
Percent reporting 100 or more days off- farm work.....	19	23	23	37	24	17
Size of farm						
Acres per farm.....	146	127	151	98	130	159
Percent under 10 acres.....	6	7	8	10	6	7
Percent under 30 acres.....	14	19	18	27	15	15

area of Illinois, farm operators depend on off-farm work, for the most part coal mining and manufacturing. According to the Census, 50 percent of all the farm operators reported some off-farm work in 1949, and 37 percent reported 100 or more days of such work. Sales of farm products averaged \$1,869 per farm reporting sales, and on 49 percent of the farms other income of the family exceeded the value of products

Table 2. — Characteristics of Farms in Illinois Economic Area 10, by Counties

(From 1950 U.S. Census of Agriculture)

Item	Counties				
	Franklin	Jefferson	Perry	Saline	Williamson
Economic class					
Commercial farms, percent.....	37	55	60	52	37
Part-time farms, percent.....	22	19	19	23	21
Residential farms, percent.....	41	26	21	25	42
Sales and other income					
Farms reporting sales of farm products, percent.....	86	94	95	95	88
Sales of farm products per farm reporting sales.....	\$1,622	\$1,996	\$2,348	\$2,080	\$1,108
Farms with other income exceeding sales of farm products, percent.....	62	43	32	42	55
Off-farm work by operators					
Percent reporting.....	56	50	46	48	54
Percent reporting 100 or more days off- farm work.....	43	34	32	36	39
Size of farm					
Acres per farm.....	83	102	139	97	78
Percent under 10 acres.....	12	7	9	11	12
Percent under 30 acres.....	32	24	21	31	31

Table 3. — Characteristics of Farms in Illinois Economic Area 8, by Counties

(From 1950 U.S. Census of Agriculture)

Item	Counties						
	Clay	Cumber- land	Hamil- ton	Jasper	Marion	Rich- land	Wayne
Economic class							
Commercial farms, percent.....	69	75	63	79	65	72	68
Part-time farms, percent.....	15	9	19	12	15	14	15
Residential farms, percent.....	16	16	18	9	20	14	17
Sales and other income							
Farms reporting sales of farm products, percent.....	98	96	96	98	96	96	96
Sales of farm products per farm reporting sales.....	\$2,530	\$3,486	\$1,867	\$3,603	\$2,533	\$2,685	\$2,339
Farms with other income exceeding sales of farm products, percent	30	23	38	23	34	26	38
Off-farm work by operators							
Percent reporting.....	42	40	37	31	46	39	45
Percent reporting 100 or more days off-farm work.....	24	20	23	14	29	23	26
Size of farm							
Acres per farm.....	134	124	116	135	127	132	126
Percent under 10 acres.....	8	8	6	8	7	8	6
Percent under 30 acres.....	21	21	17	18	19	18	17

sold. Farms averaged less than 100 acres in size, 27 percent being under 30 acres.

Six counties are similar to Wayne (Fig. 1 and Tables 1 and 3), and in them, as in Wayne, there is a good deal of off-farm work by farm operators though less than in the Franklin county area. There are no mines and no dominant types of nonfarm employment. Oil fields are a source of income and employment for some rural families. Farms averaged 127 acres in 1950, with 19 percent under 30 acres. Sales of farm products averaged \$2,664 per farm reporting sales, and on 31 percent of the farms other income exceeded the value of products sold.

In general, farm characteristics in Economic Area 11 are similar to

Table 4. — Rural Families in Counties Surveyed Grouped According to Farm and Nonfarm Work, 1947

Group	Franklin county		Wayne county	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1. Full-time farmers.....	40	21	56	32
2. Small-scale farmers.....	24	12	40	23
3. Part-time farmers.....	26	14	23	13
4. Nonfarm workers with home food production.....	37	19	22	13
5. Full-time nonfarm workers.....	40	21	19	11
6. Retired rural residents.....	25	13	13	8
Total 1-6, all groups.....	192	100	173	100
Total 1-4, farm groups.....	127	66	141	81
Total 5 and 6.....	65	34	32	19

those of Area 8 (Table 1). In Areas F and 7 and in Area 9, rural families depend more on farming and less on nonfarm income. In all of these economic areas, however, there are families that combine farming and nonfarm employment and have characteristics similar to those of groups surveyed in Franklin and Wayne counties.

Classification of Rural Families

The families surveyed were divided into six groups according to the months of farm work and nonfarm work¹ performed by the family in the year of the survey, 1947 (Table 4). In estimating the months of farm work, the time required for the work actually done was used rather than the number of months the family was free to farm. The six groups were defined as follows:

1. Full-time farmers: those doing eight or more months of farm work and no regular nonfarm work. Although in a few cases farm work required less than the full time of one man, this group was designated as full-time farmers. It included 21 percent of the families surveyed in Franklin county and 32 percent in Wayne county.

2. Small-scale farmers: those doing one to eight months of farm work and no regular nonfarm work. These were farmers who, with few exceptions, were semiretired. A few were young men who were either partially disabled or had only recently started farming. This group is particularly numerous in Wayne county, where it included 23 percent of the families surveyed. While not so classified, these farmers are in a sense part-time farmers, their operations being on too small a scale to require what is normally considered full time.

3. Part-time farmers: those doing four or more months of farm work, but also employed at nonfarm work. In this group farm work and nonfarm work were more evenly balanced than in any other group. It included 14 percent of the families surveyed in Franklin county and 13 percent of those surveyed in Wayne county.

4. Nonfarm workers with home food production: those doing one to four months of farm work but regularly employed at nonfarm work. Rural residents in this group could be considered part-time farmers but they are more accurately described as nonfarm workers producing some of their own food. Nineteen percent of the survey families in Franklin and 13 percent in Wayne were in this group.

5. Full-time nonfarm workers: those doing less than one month of farm work, otherwise employed at nonfarm work. This group is

¹ Farm work included all work done in producing agricultural products on the land operated, whether for home use or for sale. Nonfarm work was all work done away from home and included a very small amount of agricultural work for wages.

definitely made up of nonfarm workers living in the country. Included in it were 21 percent of the families surveyed in Franklin county and 11 percent of those surveyed in Wayne county.

6. Retired rural residents: those doing less than one month of either farm or nonfarm work. Thirteen percent of those surveyed in Franklin and 8 percent in Wayne were retired rural residents. In Wayne county the group was made up largely of completely retired farmers. In Franklin it was very largely a group of retired or disabled nonfarm workers.

Characteristics of Rural Families

Ages of heads of families. The average ages of heads of rural families surveyed were as follows:

	<i>Franklin county</i>	<i>Wayne county</i>
Group 1.....	48 years	42 years
Group 2.....	63 years	65 years
Group 3.....	47 years	45 years
Group 4.....	48 years	46 years
Group 5.....	43 years	38 years
Group 6.....	61 years	66 years
All groups.....	50 years	49 years

In both counties small-scale farmers and retired rural residents, Groups 2 and 6, were much older than other groups. Full-time nonfarm workers, Group 5, were the youngest. Intermediate were Groups 1, 3, and 4, full-time farmers, part-time farmers, and nonfarm workers with home food production.

The average ages of the six groups show definitely that type of employment among these rural families is related to age. When frequency distributions of ages of heads of families are grouped according to types of employment, the relation is even more clear (Table 5). In the two counties combined, 30 percent of those employed at farm work only were under 40 years and 35 percent were 60 years or older. Of those employed at both farm and nonfarm work, 42 percent were under 40 years and 7 percent were 60 or older. Of those employed at nonfarm work only, 55 percent were under 40 years and 5 percent were 60 or older. Younger heads of rural families definitely tended toward nonfarm work or a combination of farm and nonfarm work; older heads, toward farm work only or complete retirement.

An abnormally low proportion of those surveyed were in the age group of 40 to 49 years (Table 5). This was especially true of those doing farm work only and of those doing both farm and nonfarm work. Although information obtained in this survey does not explain this

Table 5. — Age Groups and Types of Employment of Heads of Rural Families, 1947^a

Age group	Heads of families with types of employment indicated					
	Farm only	Farm and nonfarm	Nonfarm only	None	All types	
					Number	Percent
Franklin county						
20-29 years.....	4	2	4	0	10	6
30-39 years.....	9	17	17	1	44	27
40-49 years.....	2	14	10	1	27	17
50-59 years.....	9	15	10	4	38	23
60-69 years.....	15	5	3	4	27	17
70 and over.....	8	1	0	8	17	10
Total.....	47	54	44	18	163	100
Percent of all types.....	29	33	27	11	100	
Average age, years.....	53	46	43	65	50	
Wayne county						
20-29 years.....	4	5	6	0	15	9
30-39 years.....	25	17	6	0	48	29
40-49 years.....	12	8	2	1	23	14
50-59 years.....	25	12	2	2	41	24
60-69 years.....	13	1	0	6	20	12
70 and over.....	13	0	0	7	20	12
Total.....	92	43	16	16	167	100
Percent of all types.....	55	25	10	10	100	
Average age, years.....	50	43	35	67	49	
Franklin and Wayne counties						
20-29 years.....	8	7	10	0	25	8
30-39 years.....	34	34	23	1	92	28
40-49 years.....	14	22	12	2	50	15
50-59 years.....	34	27	12	6	79	24
60-69 years.....	28	6	3	10	47	14
70 and over.....	21	1	0	15	37	11
Total.....	139	97	60	34	330	100
Percent of all types.....	42	30	18	10	100	
Average age, years.....	51	45	41	66	49	

^a Types of employment roughly correspond to previously defined groups as follows: the "farm only" group includes Groups 1 and 2, "farm and nonfarm" includes Groups 3 and 4, "nonfarm only" includes Group 5, and "none" includes Group 6. They do not coincide exactly, however, because the Group 1-6 classification is based on work performed by members of the family as well as the head of the family.

abnormality, a reasonable explanation is that economic conditions were unfavorable in the mid-twenties when many in this age group were establishing their homes and their occupations.

Months of work. In 1947 rural families in Franklin county averaged 11.0 months of work and those in Wayne county 11.5 months (Table 6 and Fig. 2). The four farm groups¹ averaged 12.8 and 12.5

¹ In this and certain other analyses Group 4 is referred to as a farm group. The first four groups include all families doing any significant amount of farm work. When the classification was made, it was assumed that most units in Group 4 would be classed as farms by the definition used in the 1945 Census of Agriculture.

Table 6. — Average Months of Farm and Nonfarm Work by Heads of Rural Families and by Their Families, 1947

Group	Months of farm work by—		Months of non-farm work by—		Months of all work		Months of all work by—	
	Head of family	Family	Head of family	Family	Farm	Non-farm	Head of family	Family
Franklin county								
1. Full-time farmers.....	11.0	4.0	.3	.6	15.0	.9	11.3	4.6
2. Small-scale farmers.....	3.1	.8	0	0	3.9	0	3.1	.8
3. Part-time farmers.....	4.0	1.8	9.0	.4	5.8	9.4	13.0	2.2
4. Nonfarm workers with home food production..	1.6	.6	10.0	1.0	1.9	11.0	11.3	1.6
5. Full-time nonfarm workers	0	0	10.3	1.3	0	11.6	10.3	1.3
6. Retired rural residents...	0	0	0	.2	0	.2	0	.2
Total 1-6, all groups.....	3.5	1.4	5.4	.7	4.9	6.1	8.9	2.1
Total 1-4, farm groups...	5.3	2.0	4.9	.6	7.3	5.5	10.2	2.6
Wayne county								
1. Full-time farmers.....	11.7	3.6	.2	.4	15.3	.6	11.9	4.0
2. Small-scale farmers.....	3.6	.8	.1	.2	4.4	.3	3.7	1.0
3. Part-time farmers.....	4.8	3.0	7.5	1.1	7.8	8.6	12.3	4.1
4. Nonfarm workers with home food production..	1.6	.3	8.8	3.0	1.9	11.8	10.4	3.3
5. Full-time nonfarm workers	0	0	11.2	.8	0	12.0	11.2	.8
6. Retired rural residents...	.2	0	0	0	.2	0	.2	0
Total 1-6, all groups.....	5.5	1.8	3.4	.8	7.3	4.2	8.9	2.6
Total 1-4, farm groups...	6.7	2.2	2.7	.9	8.9	3.6	9.4	3.1

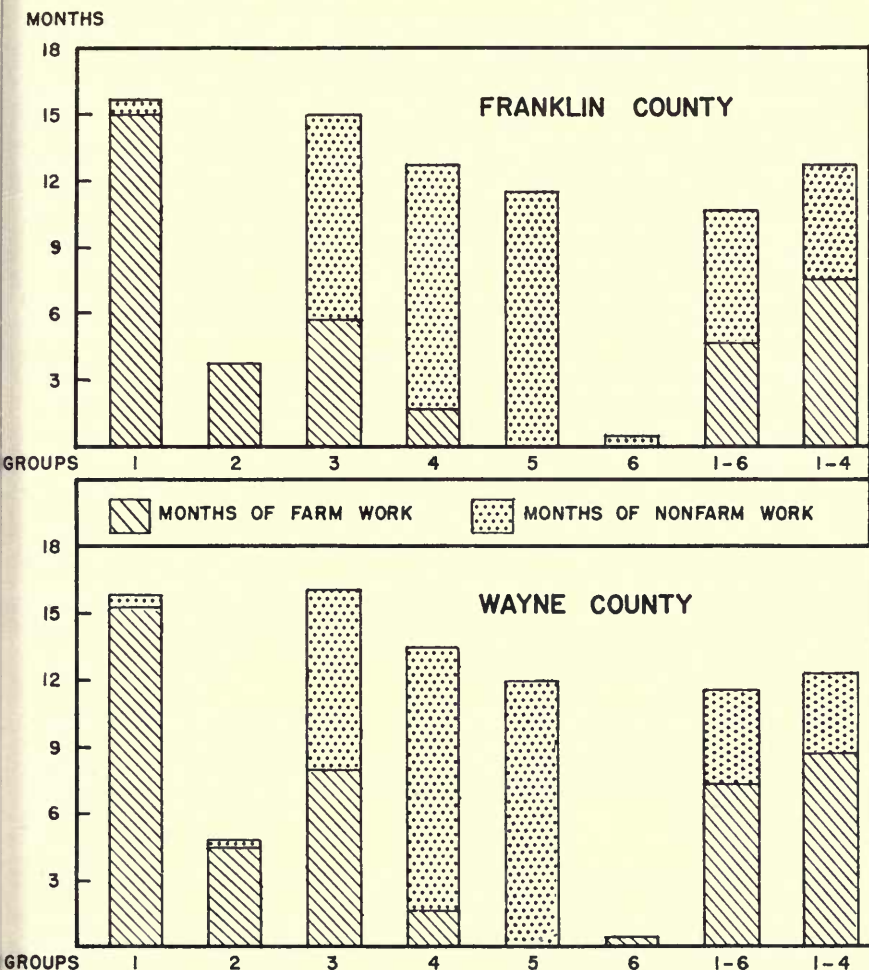
months. Full-time farmers and part-time farmers performed more months of work than other groups.

In Franklin county farm work accounted for 44 percent of all work, and in Wayne county, for 63 percent of all work. Fifty-seven percent of the work done by the four farm groups in Franklin county was farm work; in Wayne county 71 percent was farm work.

Work by members of the family other than the head of the family

Table 7. — Rural Residents Doing Nonfarm Work, Classed According to Type of Nonfarm Employment, 1947

Type of employment	Franklin county		Wayne county	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Mining or oil field work.....	65	61.9	8	12.7
Construction work.....	7	6.7	11	17.4
Manufacturing.....	11	10.4	10	15.9
Transportation, communication, and other public utilities.....	7	6.7	17	27.0
Wholesale and retail trade.....	4	3.8	6	9.5
Business, repair, personal, and other services.....	3	2.9	3	4.8
Professional and government services.....	4	3.8	6	9.5
Agricultural work.....	0	0	1	1.6
Unclassified.....	4	3.8	1	1.6
All types.....	105	100.0	63	100.0



In Wayne county farm work was in excess of nonfarm work, but in Franklin county more months were devoted to nonfarm work. (Fig. 2)

came to 19 percent of the total in Franklin county and 23 percent of the total in Wayne county. Family participation was more important in farm than in nonfarm work.

Types of nonfarm work. Members of rural families were employed at many types of nonfarm work (Table 7). In Franklin county 62 percent of such work was coal mining. In Wayne county no single type of work was so dominant although 27 percent were employed in transportation (including trucking), communications, and other public

utilities. Manufacturing and construction work were important in both counties, and oil field work in Wayne county.

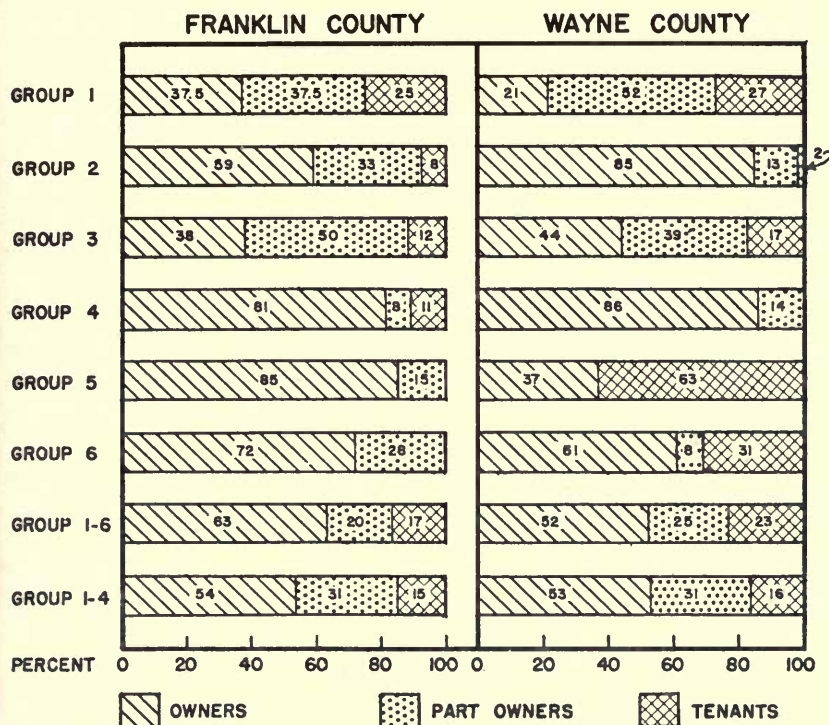
Tenure and size of holdings. In each of the two counties about eight out of ten rural families owned their homes and all or part of the land they occupied or operated (Table 8 and Fig. 3). However, of the full-time nonfarm workers in Wayne county, a group young in age, only about one-third were owners or part owners.

Many of the more active full-time and part-time farmers rented land to supplement their owned acreages (Table 8). On the other hand, many, especially among the small scale farmers in Wayne county, were men who were retiring on the land. These semiretired farmers owned an average of 86 acres, a greater number than owned by any other group, but rented out an average of 36 acres. In the same county the completely retired group (6) owned an average of 46 acres and rented out 20 acres. Except for home sites, land not rented out by this retired group was in woods and idle or waste land.

Full-time farms averaged 141 acres in Franklin county and 185 acres in Wayne county; part-time farms averaged 84 and 112 acres. Part-time farmers operated about twice as many acres as small-scale (semiretired) farmers.

Table 8.—Tenure and Average Size of Holdings of Rural Families, Grouped According to Farm and Nonfarm Work, 1947

Group	Number of units			Acres per unit			
	Owners	Part owners	Tenants	Owned	Rented	Rented out	Operated
Franklin county							
1. Full-time farmers.....	15	15	10	72	71	2	141
2. Small-scale farmers.....	14	8	2	50	5	13	42
3. Part-time farmers.....	10	13	3	46	39	1	84
4. Nonfarm workers with home food production.....	30	3	4	29	8	6	31
5. Full-time nonfarm workers.....	34	0	6	6	2	0	8
6. Retired rural residents.....	18	0	7	12	1	2	11
Total 1-6, all groups.....	121	39	32	36	23	4	55
Total 1-4, farm groups.....	69	39	19	50	34	5	79
Wayne county							
1. Full-time farmers.....	12	29	15	77	109	1	185
2. Small-scale farmers.....	34	5	1	86	5	36	55
3. Part-time farmers.....	10	9	4	68	48	4	112
4. Nonfarm workers with home food production.....	19	0	3	39	2	6	35
5. Full-time nonfarm workers.....	7	0	12	4	2	0	6
6. Retired rural residents.....	8	1	4	46	7	20	33
Total 1-6, all groups.....	90	44	39	63	44	12	95
Total 1-4, farm groups.....	75	43	23	72	53	12	113



Percentage distribution according to tenure for rural families in Franklin and Wayne counties shows that in both counties there are more owners than part owners or tenants. (Fig. 3)

Incomes. Average 1947 incomes of different groups varied greatly, both in total and in proportions from different sources (Tables 9 and 10, and Fig. 4). Total gross incomes of all families averaged about \$2,400 in each county. Part-time farmers, Group 3, averaged higher gross incomes than other groups, \$3,492 in Franklin and \$3,573 in Wayne. Second high in gross incomes were nonfarm workers with home food production in Franklin county and full-time farmers in Wayne county. When farm expenses were deducted from gross income, the remaining family income was highest for nonfarm workers with home food production in Franklin county, and highest for part-time farmers in Wayne county.

These income data are averages for the families surveyed. They cannot be considered complete measures of farm income or of the value of agricultural production. The value of the landlord's share of

Table 9. — Average Incomes of Rural Families, Grouped According to Farm and Nonfarm Work, 1947

	Income of families in group indicated						Average income Groups 1-6	Average income Groups 1-4
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Franklin county								
Sale of farm products.....	\$2,384	\$ 285	\$ 622	\$ 137	\$ 5	\$ 16	\$ 646	\$ 972
Cash "farm" expenses ^a	1,454	275	717	352	49	45	518	759
Net cash "farm" income...	930	10	-95	-215	-44	-29	128	213
Farm products consumed...	472	247	398	279	9	10	240	358
Net "farm" income.....	1,402	257	303	64	-35	-19	368	571
Nonfarm work.....	118	3	2,472	2,944	2,667	16	1,433	1,402
Other income ^b	0	160	0	13	0	429	78	34
Total family income ^c	\$1,520	\$ 420	\$2,775	\$3,021	\$2,632	\$426	\$1,879	\$2,006
Total gross income ^d	\$2,974	\$ 695	\$3,492	\$3,373	\$2,681	\$471	\$2,397	\$2,765
Wayne county								
Sale of farm products.....	\$2,456	\$ 902	\$1,370	\$ 150	\$ 0	\$ 12	\$1,206	\$1,478
Cash "farm" expenses ^a	1,438	436	1,037	392	87	41	767	925
Net cash "farm" income...	1,018	466	333	-242	-87	-29	439	553
Farm products consumed...	531	280	362	292	8	14	324	395
Net "farm" income.....	1,549	746	695	50	-79	-15	763	948
Nonfarm work.....	75	45	1,808	1,908	1,983	0	735	635
Other income ^b	164	215	33	154	30	186	144	156
Total family income ^c	\$1,788	\$1,006	\$2,536	\$2,112	\$1,934	\$171	\$1,642	\$1,739
Total gross income ^d	\$3,226	\$1,442	\$3,573	\$2,504	\$2,021	\$212	\$2,409	\$2,664

^a Includes some expenses other than those incurred in farming activities, such as taxes and repairs (and cash rent) on residences.

^b Includes income from oil leases, public assistance, veterans' subsistence payments, and pensions. Does not include past savings used or assistance from relatives.

^c Farm sales and expenses are those of the farmers interviewed. They do not include landlord's sales of crops or expenses on rented land. They do include income and expenses of the owner for land rented out.

^d Total family income plus cash "farm" expenses.

the crop on rented land was not included. Since inventory values were omitted, the data also understate the net farm incomes. In 1947 farm-account records in the area showed a very large increase in inventory and capital values. A substantial amount of this increase was in machinery and equipment. When inventory values were left out of the survey, even though machinery purchases were included in expenses, the calculated net farm incomes in both Groups 1 and 3 were materially reduced.

Farm products sold or consumed at home accounted for 36 percent of the gross income of all the families in the Franklin county survey, and for 63 percent of the gross income of all families in the Wayne county survey. For the strictly farm groups (Groups 1 to 4) in Franklin county, 48 percent of the gross income was from farm products, 51 percent from nonfarm work, and 1 percent from other

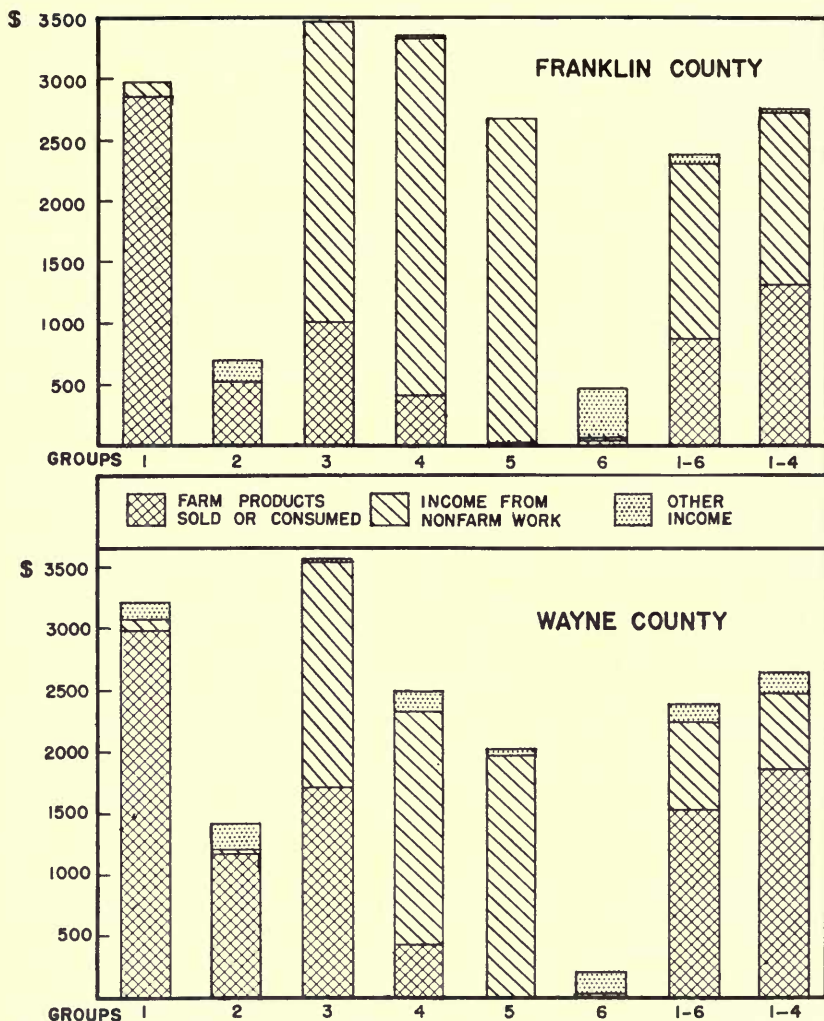
sources. In Wayne county these same groups received 70 percent of their gross income from farm products, 25 percent from nonfarm work, and 5 percent from other sources.

Opportunities for nonfarm work were favorable in 1947, when this survey was made. In Franklin county the coal mines, the principal source of nonfarm employment, operated at near their wartime peak of 280 days a year. This was approximately twice the average number of days the mines operated in prewar years. At the time of the survey, many part-time farmers were making relatively large investments in machinery and various improvements that would enable them to expand their farming operations in the future. Under markedly different economic conditions, income and spending patterns would, of course, be considerably different.

Table 10. — Average Percentages of Total Family Incomes and of Total Gross Incomes of Rural Families, Grouped According to Farm and Nonfarm Work, 1947

	Average for families in group indicated						Average for Groups 1-6	Average for Groups 1-4
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Franklin county								
Family income per unit* . . .	\$1,520	\$ 420	\$2,775	\$3,021	\$2,632	\$ 426	\$1,879	\$2,006
Net farm income, percent* . .	92	61	11	2	0	0	19	28
Nonfarm work, percent. . .	8	1	89	98	100	4	77	70
Other income, percent. . .	0	38	0	0	0	96	4	2
Gross income per unit*	\$2,974	\$ 695	\$3,492	\$3,373	\$2,681	\$471	\$2,397	\$2,765
Sales of farm products, percent.	80	41	18	4	0	3	26	35
Farm products consumed, percent.	16	36	11	8	0	2	10	13
Total farm income, percent.	(96)	(77)	(29)	(12)	(0)	(5)	(36)	(48)
Nonfarm work, percent. . .	4	0	71	87	100	3	61	51
Other income, percent. . .	0	23	0	1	0	92	3	1
Wayne county								
Family income per unit* . . .	\$1,788	\$1,006	\$2,536	\$2,112	\$1,934	\$171	\$1,642	\$1,739
Net farm income, percent. .	87	74	27	2	0	0	46	54
Nonfarm work, percent. . .	4	4	71	90	98	0	45	37
Other income, percent. . .	9	22	2	8	2	100	9	9
Gross income per unit*	\$3,226	\$1,442	\$3,573	\$2,504	\$2,021	\$212	\$2,409	\$2,664
Sales of farm products, percent.	76	62	38	6	0	6	50	55
Farm products consumed, percent.	17	20	10	12	0	6	13	15
Total farm income, percent.	(93)	(82)	(48)	(18)	(0)	(12)	(63)	(70)
Nonfarm work, percent. . .	2	3	51	76	98	0	32	25
Other income, percent. . .	5	15	1	6	2	88	5	5

* See footnotes for Table 9 for definition and description of terms.



Work done off the farm contributed more to the income of rural families in Franklin county than sale of farm products, but in Wayne county income from sale of farm products exceeded income from nonfarm work. (Fig. 4)

Comparison of Survey and Census Data

In the survey rural families were classified into six groups on the basis of labor only, and the resulting classification cannot be directly correlated with the income classification used in the Census of Agriculture. The correlation between the two classifications is sufficient,

however, for each to contribute to an understanding and evaluation of the other. Data pertinent to a comparison of the two sources, from the Census of Agriculture, 1945 and 1950, and from Survey Groups 1 to 4, are summarized in Table 11.

When the bases for classifying the survey units were formulated, it was assumed that the definition of a farm, as used in the 1945 Census, would apply to all units in Groups 1 to 4 but not to those in Groups 5 and 6. That this was true, with few exceptions, was confirmed by analysis of the data. Therefore in comparing survey and Census data, Survey Groups 5 and 6 were not considered.

In the 1950 Census¹ in the economic classification, farms were divided into *commercial farms* and *other farms*. *Commercial farms* included: (1) all farms with sales of farm products amounting to \$1,200 or more and (2) farms with sales of farm products of \$250 to \$1,999, provided that the operator worked off the farm less than 100 days in 1949 and that the income of the operator and his family from nonfarm sources was less than the total value of farm products sold. Commercial farms were divided into six classes according to the value of the products they sold.

Other farms were divided into two groups, part-time farms and residential farms. Farms with sales of farm products of \$250 to \$1,999 were classed as part-time provided that: (1) the operator worked 100 or more days off the farm, or (2) nonfarm income of the operator and his family exceeded the value of farm products sold. Residential farms included farms with sales of farm products amounting to less than \$250.

Correlations between Census and survey groups

A high degree of correlation between survey Groups 1 and 4 and Census farms is evident. Full-time farmers, Group 1 in the survey, are commercial farmers in the Census classification, while nonfarm workers with home food production, Group 4, occupy residential farms.

Correlation between Census farms and survey Groups 2 and 3 is less clear-cut and varies a good deal between the two counties. In Franklin county a part of the small-scale farmers, Group 2, are commercial farmers by Census classification, and a part occupy residential farms. Although the percentages of units designated as part-time were almost identical in the survey and Census, in both counties the groups so designated are somewhat different. In Wayne county a considerable number of farms classified as part-time by the survey

¹ Bureau of Census. 1950 United States Census of Agriculture, Illinois, Volume I, Part 5.

Table 11. — Comparison of Farm Data From Census of Agriculture 1945 and 1950, and From 1947 Survey Farms, Averages per Farm

Item	Data for Franklin county			Data for Wayne county		
	1945 Census	1950 Census	1947 survey	1945 Census	1950 Census	1947 survey
Number of farms	2,312	2,279	127	3,017	2,824	141
Value of agricultural products						
Total, per farm.	\$ 985	..	\$1,330*	\$1,471	..	\$1,873*
Total, per farm reporting.	\$1,000	..	..	\$1,508	..	..
Sold, per farm.	\$ 811	\$1,397	\$ 972*	\$1,211	\$2,256	\$1,478*
Home use, per farm.	\$ 174	..	\$ 358	\$ 260	..	\$ 395
Sold, commercial farms, per farm						
reporting sales. . . . .	..	\$3,347	..	..	\$3,133	..
Sold, other farms, per farm re-						
porting sales. . . . .	..	\$ 331	..	..	\$ 422	..
Classification of farms						
Economic classes, 1950						
Commercial farms, percent. . . . .	..	37	..	..	68	..
Part-time farms, percent. . . . .	..	22	..	..	15	..
Residential farms, percent. . . . .	..	41	..	..	17	..
Survey farms						
Full-time farms, percent. . . . .	..	..	31	..	..	40
Small-scale farms, percent. . . . .	..	..	19	..	..	28
Part-time farms, percent. . . . .	..	..	21	..	..	16
Nonfarm workers with home food						
production, percent. . . . .	..	..	29	..	..	16
Farms producing mainly for sale,						
percent.	64	..	..	86	..	..
Farms with other income exceeding						
value of products sold, percent	..	62	..	..	38	..
Off-farm work						
Operators reporting, percent.	55	56	54	38	45	38
Operators reporting, 100 or more						
days, percent.	49	43	..	28	26	..
Operators reporting, 200 or more						
days, percent.	42	..	..	15	..	..
Size of farm						
Total acres operated.	80	83	79	124	126	113
Acres owned.	54	65	50	63	83	72
Acres rented.	26	24	34	61	58	53
Acres rented out. . . . .	..	6	5	..	15	12
Acres per farm, commercial farms. .	..	154	..	..	162	..
Acres per farm, other farms. . . . .	..	42	..	..	50	..
Farms by tenure						
Full owners, percent.	65	69	54	48	50	53
Part owners, percent.	20	22	31	28	31	31
Tenants, percent.	15	9	15	24	19	16

* Value of agricultural products and sales in survey are not comparable with Census data. See footnotes for Table 9.

method have at least \$1,200 from the sale of farm products and would be classed as commercial farms by the Census method. In Franklin county among those farms placed in the part-time group by the survey were a few farms classified as commercial or residential in the Census.

Correlation between classes of Census and survey farms can be only general and by no means exact. The basis of classification differed, some income items were recorded differently, and the Census and survey were for different years. It is to be expected that correlation between a classification based on income and one based on employments would vary with year-to-year differences in levels of

production and prices of farm products, and in nonfarm opportunities and earnings. Particularly in an area like Franklin county where many farmers are employed at nonfarm work, the proportions of commercial, part-time, and residential farms, as the economic classes are defined in the Census, will vary from year to year.

Economic status of farmers. Over-all averages of farm income or production per farm are entirely inadequate in describing the economic status of farm families, and other rural families in areas where many families combine farm and nonfarm activities. In recent enumerations especially, the Census of Agriculture has reported county data with farms classified by size, income from farm products, type of farm, etc. In these breakdowns the characteristics of various groups of farmers are analyzed, including how much they produce as farmers and how much they depend on farming for a living. A great deal is added to this analysis by the economic classification of farms in the 1950 Census, particularly in the statistics for economic areas. These statistics present detailed information for each of the nine economic classes of farms — part-time, residential, abnormal, and the six classes of commercial farms. However, without accompanying nonfarm income data such as found in the survey, description of the economic status of these various income groups is incomplete. The significance of complete description for specifically defined groups is illustrated by the following information obtained about farm families in the survey (Groups 1 to 4).¹

Franklin county

1. For all groups farm income, including sales and value of farm products consumed in the household, averaged \$1,330 per farm. Including income from nonfarm work and other nonfarm sources, the total per family was \$2,765.

2. Full-time farmers made up 31 percent of all farmers but accounted for 77 percent of all sales of farm products and 68 percent of the value of farm products sold or consumed. Nonfarm workers with home food production were 29 percent of all farms but accounted for only 4 percent of all sales and 9 percent of the value of all farm products sold or consumed.

3. If Group 4 were omitted, total farm income of the remaining three groups would be decreased by 9 percent and farm income per farm would be increased to \$1,706, or by 28 percent. If Group 4 were

¹ Although Group 4 is included as a farm group these nonfarm workers with home food production are much more important as a part of the nonfarm economy of the area than they are as farmers.

omitted, total income, from farm and nonfarm sources, would be decreased by 36 percent, and total income per farm family would be decreased to \$2,516, or by 9 percent.

Wayne county

1. For all groups total farm income averaged \$1,873 per farm; including nonfarm sources, the average was \$2,664 per family.

2. Full-time farmers made up 40 percent of all farmers but accounted for 66 percent of all sales of farm products and 63 percent of the value of farm products sold or consumed. Nonfarm workers with home food production made up 16 percent of all farmers but accounted for only 2 percent of all sales and 3 percent of the value of all farm products sold or consumed.

3. If Group 4 were omitted, total farm income of the remaining three groups would be decreased by 3 percent and farm income per farm would be increased to \$2,138 or by 14 percent. If Group 4 were omitted, total income, from farm and nonfarm sources, would be decreased by 15 percent and total income per farm family would be increased to \$2,694, or by 1 percent.

Planning Programs for Different Groups

The major objective of this two-county survey was to ascertain the characteristics of rural families in southern Illinois in order to aid in the planning and carrying out of educational and other welfare programs in the area. These families, as already shown, may be divided into several groups with widely different characteristics in age, economic status, dependence on farm and nonfarm income, etc. The effectiveness of any program in the rural areas of southern Illinois may depend on whether its leaders recognize that the problems and interests of these groups vary greatly.

In both counties, but particularly in Franklin, there are many rural families who are not an economic part of a farming community but who do count in a social sense. They are as much concerned as their farmer neighbors, possibly more so, with such civic problems as schools, churches, health, recreation, and roads. In any local program dealing with such problems these families cannot be left out.

Nonfarm rural families

The survey suggests that there are three distinct groups of nonfarm rural families. What characteristics of these groups should be recognized in developing rural programs?

Retired rural families are mainly an old-age group. The heads of such households are retired because of age or disability. They are fewer in number than any other group, yet they make up about 10 percent of the families surveyed. Their current incomes are low and they are meeting living expenses largely from savings, pensions, and public assistance or help from relatives. In Wayne county retired rural residents are mainly farmers who are living on their own farms. Those in the survey rented an average of 20 acres of land to active farmers.¹ Some of these retired farmers may take an active part in farm programs. As a whole, however, their advanced age and general lack of capital prevent their taking a position of leadership in promoting improved farming practices.

Full-time nonfarm workers form a large group, especially in Franklin county. They are an important part of the nonfarm labor force of the area and their welfare is directly dependent on opportunities for employment off the farm. They produce little of their own food, but other living costs are lower than in town. However, many families in this group prefer to live in the country for noneconomic reasons.

These full-time nonfarm workers are the youngest of all the rural groups. Many are in the early years of married life and have children of school and preschool ages. Among this group there should be active leaders in programs related to school, to the activities of children and young people, and to homemaking, health, and recreation.

Nonfarm workers with home food production have been referred to as a farm group in previous discussion, but their economic interests are predominantly nonfarm. However, they do grow a considerable amount of food for home use and for occasional sale, and they should be interested in improving the production of poultry, eggs, dairy products, vegetables, and fruits. Their boys and girls should take an active interest in 4-H and rural health programs.

A high proportion of nonfarm workers in this third group own their homes and the land they occupy. At the time of the survey they seldom expressed any intention of expanding their farming activities and will probably continue to form an essentially nonfarm group. Quite often, however, they have enough land suitable for farming to

¹ In the survey the incomes of retired rural residents were probably incompletely listed, particularly in Wayne county. It is believed that some income from investments and from land rented out was not reported. Such omissions were likely in cases where land was owned in a tract separate from the one on which the retired rural resident was living. It also seems likely that the incomes of some semiretired farmers were incompletely reported. Such omissions, however, were hardly of enough magnitude to affect the averages to any significant degree.

expand their food production considerably. In general they were utilizing their land rather inefficiently and many acres were idle.

Farming families

Each of the three groups of survey families classified as farmers is important in the agricultural economy of the area. The three differ so greatly, however, in their problems that one could hardly expect them to be equally influenced by the same type of programs.

Full-time farmers have been the major interest of most agricultural programs. Obviously this is the group on which the program should center if its objective is to increase the volume of farm products sold. Yet full-time farmers numbered only about one-half of all those surveyed (Groups 1, 2, and 3).

The full-time farmers in these counties vary widely in ages, size of farms, and tenure status. But they have one feature in common: they devote all of their time to farming and are dependent almost entirely on farming for their income. All are interested in improving and maintaining fertility of their land and in establishing productive systems of farming that make full use of their labor and other resources. In this group there is the most active participation and leadership in programs aimed at increasing the individual's efficiency in agricultural production, and in programs aimed at improving the welfare of farmers through group action.

Small-scale farmers, also important in the agricultural production of southern Illinois, depend almost entirely on income from their farms. Their distinctive characteristic is that they are mainly a semiretired group, renting out a considerable part of the land they own. In total, these semiretired farmers in Wayne county own 80 percent as many acres as full-time farmers but operate only 20 percent as many. Their major problems would appear to be: finding systems of farming that they can carry out efficiently on decreasing acreage and with declining physical ability, and getting good farming practices on land they rent to other farmers. Semiretired farmers are frequently active in organized farm programs since they have much free time.

Part-time farmers are relatively young and are active in agricultural production. In 1947 many were carrying on rather extensive farming operations in addition to doing practically full-time work off the farm. Their farm expenses were high in relation to their farm incomes since they were making sizeable investments in machinery and lesser ones in improving land and buildings. They were expanding their farming, mainly by renting cropland to be worked with their

new machinery, and a number expressed intentions of devoting all of their time to farming in the future.

Those making the survey were of the opinion that part-time farmers as a whole were not being effectively reached in the agricultural extension program, even though there were some individuals who were active in it. There appears to be a good deal of latent leadership in this group that could be developed.

Two general problems are of special importance to a part-time farmer. One is the working out of a farming system — combination of enterprises — that will best fit in with his nonfarm work schedule and his available family labor. The other is deciding how best to use the earnings of good-income years to increase permanently the productive capacity of his farm. This is an especially important consideration for the part-time farmer who is thinking of changing to full-time. However, with nonfarm employment rather unstable in the area, especially where coal mining is the principal kind of nonfarm work, the problem is an important one for all part-time farmers.

Tenure pattern of farming families. Most farmers in Franklin and Wayne counties own their homes and occupy them for a long time. This suggests that there is a stable basis for farm and home improvement programs and community activities. About 75 percent of all full-time farmers, over 90 percent of all small-scale farmers, and about 85 percent of all part-time farmers owned at least part of the land they operated. Full-time farmers rented more land than they owned, and part-time farmers rented almost as many acres as they owned.

In these areas most farmers own land and a home at a relatively early age. Frequently they own a small tract when they begin farming. As they accumulate money during their active years, they rent and occasionally buy additional land. During these years a high proportion — higher than in any other Illinois area — are part owners, renting roughly as many acres as they own.

It is also part of the tenure pattern in these areas for farmers to retire on their own farms and during their retirement to farm less and less land. First they give up renting additional land; then they rent out part of the land they own. This cycle of farming activity is well illustrated in both counties by the characteristics of survey Groups 1 and 2, and in Wayne county, by Group 6.

The tenure pattern described here is associated with low farm incomes, low land values, and low capital inputs per farm. It is a flexible pattern making possible a great deal of adjustment in the size of farm to fit the physical ability, family labor supply, and available

capital of the individual farmer. It also provides the security of home and land ownership to a large proportion of farmers. It is a complex system, however, with many multiple-tract farms that are inconvenient to operate. Renting of single fields on a year-to-year basis also discourages good practices of land use and fertility maintenance. Such rented land is important in the economy of many farmers and in the total agricultural production of the area. Program planners should consider how to include such land effectively in conservation and other long-time land use programs.

SUMMARY

In this study rural families living in the open country were classified into six groups according to their farm and nonfarm employment. These groups show the various adjustments that families have made to natural resources and other factors affecting the economy of southern Illinois. Together the two counties are representative of a larger area, the sixteen southernmost counties of Illinois. Franklin is a coal-mining county; Wayne is predominantly agricultural. Proportionate number of families in various employment groups differed in the two counties, but characteristics of a particular group were similar.

Relatively few of the families surveyed were full-time farmers — 21 percent in Franklin county and 32 percent in Wayne. In each county they produced about two-thirds of all farm products.

There were six-tenths as many small-scale farmers as there were full-time farmers. With less than eight months of farm work and no nonfarm work, small-scale farmers were largely semiretired. They rented out much of the land they owned. Their land was being rented by active farmers, a high proportion of whom were part owners.

In Franklin county 54 percent of the families were dependent on nonfarm work; in Wayne county 37 percent depended on nonfarm work. Fourteen percent in Franklin county and 13 percent in Wayne were part-time farmers with four or more months of farm work. They were actively engaged in production for sale. Most of them were expanding their farming and many expressed intentions of developing full-time farms. Others, 40 percent in Franklin and 24 percent in Wayne, were strictly nonfarm workers. About half were producing food for home use, but few intended to expand their farming.

Few of the families surveyed were being effectively reached by the extension program or by other programs serving rural areas. One step in increasing the effectiveness of such programs is to recognize the varied interests of rural families as shown in grouping by employment.

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